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Prayers

771 Certainly the fact that this race does not have external manifestations of worship greatly attracts the attention of men of science and missionaries. The Chiriguano is born and grows like a little lamb is born and grows. They do not know where they come from, and all of their actions are reduced to pure nature. The Chiriguano never raises his mind or his heart upward. [821] He discusses the firmament; he counts the stars and even separates them into groups as though by astronomical principles; he admires the grandiosity of the sun and of the moon, he understands the beneficence of the nourishing world, but the totality remains mute and silent before the works of nature or of creation. [782] Visible things do not lead the intelligence of the Chiriguano to the knowledge of the Cause of such effects, and inasmuch as he has a rather vague idea of God, he does not offer worship to Him or to anything which resembles Him.

782 It is consequently useless to look for idols in this country, just as it is extremely useless to inquire about temples or hermitages for religious gatherings. Prayers, however much they may be investigated, are very abridged, if there are any, and are not worth being called such, because they are rather a kind of boasting by the one uttering them, in order that all may see that he is eloquent in speaking. This is what they do in the general gatherings when they drink for many days and eat in the plaza. [539] Enthusiasm comes in the heat of drinking, and, on seeing an immense multitude, someone will raise his voice, saying more or less the following: Çheru Tunpa, icaviño taicó, pucu emeé cheve cherecovena, cherimbiuna emoñimoña cheve, tacherori catu taicó, anu tamano. My God, make me be well off, give me a long life, make my food be produced, give me happiness, do not allow me to die (2).

• [761] 2. The only thing that the Chiriguano wants is to live forever, but he sees that it is impossible and contents himself with expressing his vehement desire, but he does not believe that death comes to him naturally.

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776 778 small apartments, owned by the Iya, a child who leaves footprints when it walks. They believe these things as though they were real.

312 778 823 776 Among the many springs that are plentiful in the San Buenaventura de Ivu Mision there are several with hot, sulphurous water. None of the old people will go near these springs, and the only ones who do it are boys and girls who, because they have embraced the Catholic religion perhaps and because the teaching of the /146/ missionary makes them understand that only God need be feared, have no fear of these inoffensive things. Nevertheless, [961] when some schoolgirl dies, the old people say that such a thing has happened because of the lack of care shown by them when they approached and bathed in these springs owned by the Iya.

778 776 The aforesaid shows that the old Chiriguano is very superstitious, and because of his love of life he respects the places where the imaginary genii can be found. If such places were [961] [953] discovered and disturbed through someone's error, he either would soon die or he would lead an unfortunate life full of long sicknesses ending in death, and for this reason it is impossible for a true Chiriguano to reveal the places which, according to his affirmations, are possessed by genii (1).

1. At the end of the year 1899 a gentleman from Sucre began work in the petroleum site of Mandiyuti in Cuevo. Unfortunately, he died of acute bronchitis, but the Indians attributed his death to the anger of the Iya.

Sorcerers

754 756 Another consequence of ignorance is a belief in sorcerers. This belief, however, is much more general. The working man accepts it, as does the moderately enlightened. The man who is in a completely savage state accepts it, as well as the one who is beginning to become civilised. It is accepted in America, as in old Europe, extensive Asia, deserted Africa, and newest Oceania. Nevertheless, the word "sorcerer" does not have the

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[825] According to the story of Guarerai, the choncho is the
[176] father of good sorcerers, especially those who make it rain, and the chena is the father of bad sorcerers, or those who hold back the rain. In any public calamity in certain places, all the Indians will gather around the Ipaye, or sorcerer, so that the calamity may cease. If this continues despite the sorcerer's promise and he is unable to blame anyone else for his impotence, as the choncho did, he is killed with blows and burned without pity, but if he can blame it on another chena, the latter will suffer the capital punishment, and his protests of innocence or ignorance will be of no avail. Such is the fury of the mob when they are exalted by the harangues of the good Ipaye!

825 Before passing on from these feared and respected birds, I
787 shall say in passing that at night a whitish bird that they call
763 Tetê walks and flies about. When they see it, it is a sure sign to the Indians that in some house the women are about to cut their hair as a sign of mourning, that is, that someone in the town will die. As for the small owl /lechuza/, Suinda, the beliefs of the Chiriguano are the same as those of the common people of Europe and America, the differences among them being slight (1).

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1. As will be seen, mourning among the Chiriguano women consists of cutting their hair and wearing the dirtiest rag on their heads. Mourning is always complete, that is, they observe strict mourning for any dead person.

756 /148/ Good sorcerers, represented by the choncho, are very
754 compassionate, and they do everything possible so that the race may enjoy good health, fortune, good crops, without experiencing hunger or epidemics, while bad sorcerers bring every evil to the poor Chiriguano. They hold back rain and order epidemics, as well as hunger and death. Bad sorcerers are called Mbaecuá.

754 The Chiriguano does not die because it is so decreed, because
● 761 it is a condition of human nature; he does not die as a result of sin of the first man. He dies because bad sorcerers exist; without

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754 them life would be delightful and eternal here on earth where
•76a God put him, as has been seen when we were dealing with the creation.

754 The same might be said of sickness. If there is something
753 the matter with a foot, the head, the stomach, or any other part of the body, they do not blame human nature, the elements, the seasons, the sudden changes of the atmosphere so common in the region, but bad sorcerers. If someone dies suddenly, if the old and the young die, if smallpox breaks out in the village, or any other epidemic, it is always blamed on the evil sorcerers (1).

[761] 1. If someone dies because he has drunk in someone else's house, they attribute it to poison administered by sorcery. Death produced by falls, suicide, or murder is not attributed to the sorcerer.

756 Some sorcerers are best for rain and for the fields, and others
622 for illness. If some contagious disease begins to spread around a
623 Chiriguano town or if in the town itself one case or another has
643 appeared, the principle cacique convokes a council of all of
571 the lower caciques; they discuss the appropriate measures to
731 be instituted in order to chase away the sickness at once. The
755 first thing they do is to call one of the well-known sorcerers. Then a commission is formed to take the entreaty to the great charlatan, and usually the one charged with this is the head cacique himself, who is accompanied by one or two of the lower caciques.

755 The sorcerer receives the cacique's invitation as a very
756 great honor, and furthermore, hearing the offers they make
554 him if he manages to drive away or expel the epidemic, there
731 is no idiot who would reject it, since the sorcerer in another town is king for the whole time that he stays there. Everything is at his disposal, men and women, goods /149/ and clothing, food and drink. He spends a better life than that of a great lord (1).

1. The one who explains the object of the

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797 177 In sum, the adult Indian infidel, when carefully watched over, is quite submissive in complying with the orders of the missionary father, and even when drunk he is gentle and humble. Although it is quite true that he wishes to know nothing of religion as long as he lives, in order not to learn to pray and to comply with what religion demands, nevertheless today almost all ask for or receive baptism at the time of death. The difficulties which formerly occurred with respect to the sick who were in danger of death, which would be interminable in the telling, have now almost completely disappeared. (1)

1. It is more difficult to baptize old women, for it is they who advise a sick person to refuse to accept baptism, while others coax him to accept for material gain. In such cases it is very necessary to know their language.

[595] If an Indian or a cacique had two or more wives when a mission was founded, bit by bit the missionary can make him give them up until he has but one. This requires some effort, but through persuasion and threats the desired end can be obtained, because this is one of the conditions which the minister of God sets when he is asked by the Indians to establish a mission. This is what I did in San Antonio del Parapiti, and they accepted all the conditions very willingly.

● 761 797 177 The adult Chiriguano is not baptized while he enjoys good health; he only does it at the time of dying and when he is almost sure that he cannot live any longer. In the past it was even difficult to baptize infants, because they were convinced that baptism is the cause of death, for in their ignorance they did not understand that those who receive baptism in a serious illness died because of the gravity of the disease.

The missionary, because of his long experience, easily recognizes who is in danger of dying, and it is unlikely that he will err, because the serious illnesses of the Chiriguano are known diseases, such as dropsy, smallpox, dysentery, and consumption, to name the principal ones. He thus baptizes precisely those who cannot live, because it would be very

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difficult afterward to make them comply with what religion requires. The result of this is that the Indian believes without foundation that baptism causes death (1).

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1. Some of them experience so much sadness with being adult Christians that they try to take their own lives: this happens when they are half out of their minds with some dangerous illness.

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When a baptized person whose life is in danger survives, it is not likely that he will comply with what religion requires, and only at the missionary's insistence is the matter finally resolved, but he enters the church secretly, seeking the corners or the sacristy, so that no one will see him, and, when there is a change of missionaries, he takes advantage of the ignorance of the one who is new to the mission so as not to attend religious ceremonies. Then what kind of Christians are these? In church they are like idiots, being almost unable to learn prayers, either because it is difficult or because they are unwilling to learn them. In church they are little different from brutes: in their houses they behave like the infidels among whom they live: they play, sing, and drink the same as the rest of them (2).

2. We should not be too astonished by the behavior of the Indian who has survived after being baptized while gravely ill, because the poor souls had never seen a church in their lives nor did they know anything about the obligations of praying to and worshiping a Supreme Being, about whom, in their unbelief, they had no exact idea and barely a remote one.

In a mission already old, all this does not happen. There are Indians with tembeta and long hair, there are old women with their tipoy who go to Mass and comply with the other obligations of the Catholic Church, but almost all are mute, that is to say, they do not utter a single word of prayer. Some will say, and I too say, that with time the opposite will be the case, but